

Veterans Affairs

2004-2005 Report on Plans and Priorities

Approved:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Albina Guarnieri". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "A".

The Honourable Albina Guarnieri, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs

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Messages and Management Representation Statement

Minister's Message



As Canadians, we have the highest respect and honour for our Veterans for their selfless contribution to world peace and freedom. Whether they are our traditional Veterans of the war era or Veterans who have served in times of armed conflict or peace operations, these courageous men and women have sacrificed much – and, as we are acutely aware, some have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

We express our profound debt of gratitude through Remembrance events and activities because of our Veterans' defence of our fundamental democratic values and freedoms.

In October 2004, our nation will mark the 60th Anniversary of the Italian Campaign, and we will commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of the Second World War in 2005.

In addition to our leadership role in Remembrance programming, Veterans Affairs is also responsible for a disability pension program, with an independent redress process, and a health care program. The benefits and services we offer through these programs are provided to Veterans, Canadian Forces members, members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and their surviving spouses and families. This 2004-2005 Report on Plans and Priorities demonstrates to Canadians the value of these benefits and services to our Veterans and other clients, as well as the importance of Remembrance by all Canadians – particularly young Canadians. It also serves as an instrument of accountability for Canadians and Parliamentarians by presenting the commitments we are making over the next three years to transform the delivery of our services, enhance the vital partnerships we have in place, and show how we, at Veterans Affairs, are evolving to meet the changing needs of our diverse group of clients.

In keeping with our successful client-centred service model, our Veterans and other clients will be served in a timely manner, with fairness, respect, courtesy and dignity. We will ensure that the increasingly complex health and home care needs of our aging war service Veterans are met, and that we assist these Veterans to remain independent in their homes and communities. At the same time, we will seek to respond more rigorously to the needs of Canadian Forces Veterans as they make the transition from military to civilian life. With an average age of 39 years at time of release, these Veterans' life circumstances and needs are profoundly different from those of our elderly Veterans. Over the last three years, our Canadian Forces client population has increased 58% and this trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. As a

result, we need to provide appropriate assistance to our Canadian Forces Veterans through modernized programs and services that are tailored to their needs.

Veterans Affairs remains actively involved in a number of government-wide initiatives. In this respect, we will continue to expand upon the success of our Service Improvement Initiative, further develop our Government On-Line capacities, and enhance our efforts at modern comptrollership. As well, we will make certain the principles and practices of sustainable development are integrated into our day-to-day operations, programs and services.

We continue to seek creative and innovative solutions to accomplish our plans and priorities. We believe that with careful planning and constant monitoring, we will improve our service to all of Canada's Veterans. I invite you to read through this report and see how dedicated professionals at VAC continue to provide exemplary service in order to improve the quality of life of our very special clientele. Additionally, the many web sites listed throughout this report will provide you with more detailed information.

I believe our Veterans and our other clients deserve the very best that we can provide, and I know that Veterans Affairs will meet its many obligations in the service of those who have given so much for Canada.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Albina Guarnieri".

The Honourable Albina Guarnieri, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Veterans Affairs

Chair's Message



During the past year, the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB) developed a three-year strategic plan to manage risk and provide for sustenance and improvement in its review and appeal process. The Board's long-term plans will ensure that applicants have confidence that their appeals are dealt with fairly, consistently and expeditiously by VRAB staff and members.

For the planning period covered by this Report on Plans and Priorities, VRAB has identified a number of priorities as profiled in its strategic plan. This includes endeavouring to further enhance service by working with Veterans Affairs Canada and representative organizations such as the Royal Canadian Legion to modernize how review and appeal claims are managed. There will also be a renewed focus on the training of staff and members as well as an improved research capability to ensure that all the necessary information is on hand to competently deal with all claims. We will also focus on communications as a priority by making information more accessible and by increasing awareness of the Board's role, responsibilities and practices in the pensions and allowances appeal process.

VRAB is committed to the modernization of management practices as set out in the federal government's Modern Comptrollership Initiative and Management Accountability Framework. We have made considerable progress on Modern Comptrollership and will continue to implement our action plan developed during the past fiscal year. As an arm's length agency, we are accountable to Canadians for our decisions and the responsible use of our resources. We take this responsibility very seriously and continually strive to improve our accountability to all Canadians.

With the implementation of its strategic plan, this planning period has the potential to be one of great change for VRAB and we look forward to seizing this opportunity.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Victor Marchand".

Victor A. Marchand
Chair, Veterans Review and Appeal Board

Management Representation Statement

We submit, for tabling in Parliament, the *2004-2005 Report on Plans and Priorities* for Veterans Affairs, a Portfolio comprising Veterans Affairs Canada and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board.

This document has been prepared based on the reporting principles and disclosure requirements contained in the *Guide to the Preparation of the 2004-2005 Report on Plans and Priorities*:

- # It accurately portrays the Portfolio's plans and priorities.
- # The planned spending information in this document is consistent with the directions provided in the Minister of Finance's Budget and by Treasury Board Secretariat.
- # It is comprehensive and accurate.
- # It is based on sound underlying Portfolio information and management systems.

The reporting structure on which this document is based has been approved by Treasury Board Ministers and is the basis for accountability for the results achieved with the resources and authorities provided.



Jack Stagg
Deputy Minister
Veterans Affairs Canada
February 5, 2004



Victor Marchand
Chair
Veterans Review and
Appeal Board
February 5, 2004

About Veterans Affairs

At Veterans Affairs, we endeavour to make a difference in the lives of a select group of Canadians: Veterans, Canadian Forces still-serving members, past and present members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and their surviving spouses and families. Not only do we reach out to this special group but also all Canadians through our Remembrance activities across Canada and overseas.

Veterans Affairs is a Portfolio consisting of two distinct and separate organizations: Veterans Affairs Canada (the Department) and the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (the Board) which operates at arm's length from the Department. Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) provides pensions for disability or death, economic support in the form of allowances, and health care benefits and services to our Veterans and other clients. For those who wish to appeal a VAC decision relating to a pension disability or War Veterans Allowance claim, the Veterans Review and Appeal Board provides an independent redress process. The Bureau of Pensions Advocates, an organization of lawyers within the Department, provides free legal advice and representation to clients wishing to pursue their claim. For the courageous men and women who serve our country in times of war, conflict and peace, we recognize and honour their sacrifice and achievements through our Remembrance programming.

The missions of the Department and the Board are as follows:

Veterans Affairs Canada	Veterans Review and Appeal Board
To provide exemplary, client-centred services and benefits that respond to the needs of Veterans, our other clients and their families, in recognition of their services to Canada; and to keep the memory of their achievements and sacrifices alive for all Canadians.	To ensure fairness in Canada's programs for disability pensions and war Veterans allowances by providing research and advisory support and fair and expeditious appeal adjudications.

Veterans Affairs Canada is headquartered in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island with an office in Ottawa, Ontario. In addition, staff serve Canadians from 40 offices or service centres across Canada. VAC also operates Ste. Anne's Hospital in Ste. Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec. The Veterans Review and Appeal Board is located in Charlottetown and its members also serve Canadians at 40 locations throughout Canada.



Web Site Access

The Portfolio:

- # Organization
- # Programs Offered
- # Veterans Affairs Canada
- # Veterans Review and Appeal Board

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/organization>

The Department:

- # Departmental Reports
- # Legislation Administered by Veterans Affairs
- # Mandate, Mission, Vision, Values and Ethics
- # People in Charge
- # Press Room

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department>

The Board:

- # About VRAB
- # Frequently Asked Questions
- # Strategic Plan 2003-2006

<http://www.vrab-tacra.gc.ca>

Planning Overview

Veterans Affairs' programs are largely managed through grants and contributions, and we are held to the terms and conditions set out in each individual grant or contribution. The major programs and services offered are a disability pension program with an independent redress process, health care program, and Remembrance program. Each of these programs is constantly evolving to meet the current and future needs of our clients.

During this planning period, Veterans Affairs will continue to focus on improving the delivery of service to our diverse family of clients. The demographics of our client groups are shifting, and since our programs were designed for war-era clients, we are modernizing our programs and policies to adapt to current realities. As our Veterans become less able to share their experiences and their understanding of the price of freedom, our priority will be to provide Canada's youth with the tools they need to accept the "Torch of Remembrance" from our elderly Veterans.

Although the number of aging war service Veterans is declining, their advancing age and deteriorating health often intensify their health care needs. VAC provides long-term care and other assistance to more than 500 Veterans at Ste. Anne's Hospital (the last remaining federal Veterans' hospital). It also supports Veterans who wish to stay in their home or community, or may require long-term residential care available from facilities across the country.

Canada's participation in international operations and conflicts has translated into an increased number of Canadian Forces still-serving members and Veterans seeking assistance from VAC. As this number grows, it becomes even more crucial that we adapt our programs and policies to address their unique needs and circumstances. This is also true for our RCMP clients who present a different set of needs from those of our Canadian Forces clients and traditional war service Veterans.

As of March 2004, we are providing benefits and services to approximately 210,000 clients. By March 2007, this figure is expected to decrease slightly to approximately 206,000 clients. Although the number of war service Veterans is steadily declining, the number of Canadian Forces and RCMP clients is increasing. Moreover, VAC has witnessed an overwhelming increase (over the last decade) in the number of Veterans applying for disability pensions, and this increase is expected to continue. For VAC, the impact is an increasing demand for our benefits and services, despite a modest decline in the overall number of Veterans in Canada. As a result, we are experiencing a growing backlog in processing claims and our process turnaround times are lengthening.

Many initiatives have been undertaken to address this increased workload. For example, new technologies and creative business processes have been adopted. As well,

resources have been redirected from existing programs to meet new and urgent client needs. Despite these measures, Veterans Affairs is more and more challenged to maintain our timely, professional and compassionate service to our Veterans and other clients.

The advancing age of our traditional war service Veterans has also had an impact on our Remembrance programming. Pilgrimages are becoming less viable as international travel and extended events become too onerous for aging Veterans. At the other end of the age spectrum, our youth have little knowledge or appreciation of the sacrifices made by our Veterans during wartime; therefore, engaging youth in our Remembrance activities is essential to keeping our Veterans' legacy alive. Lastly, our Remembrance programming is also widening to remember and honour our newest Veterans for the sacrifices they have made when they served in international conflicts overseas.

For the Veterans Review and Appeal Board, applicants pursuing redress of their disability pension and war veterans allowance decisions have increasingly complex medical conditions and interrelationships between diseases. As well, changes in pension legislation and streamlining within VAC have had an impact on how VRAB conducts its own operations. VRAB is addressing these realities by improving its research capability, enhancing its processing capability through the introduction of case management and strengthening training for members to ensure responsible administration of the appeals program.

In our efforts to improve service, Veterans Affairs faces a number of challenges. Our client demographics are shifting. Their needs are diverse, depending on their individual circumstances. Our financial and human resources are limited. Therefore, we must be innovative in seeking solutions to improving our service. Part of this innovation involves our partners. What we do for our Veterans and other clients could not be achieved without the assistance and support of our many partners and stakeholders. This includes major Veterans organizations, private sector organizations, the voluntary sector, as well as other levels of government. In times of fiscal restraint, these partnerships are vital to meeting our goals.

Plans and Priorities by Strategic Outcome

Summary

The strategic outcomes shown below are the long-term and enduring benefits to Canadians that stem from the vision and efforts of both VAC and VRAB. These outcomes describe the difference that VAC and VRAB are mandated to make.

① Benefits and Services Programs	The delivery of benefits and services that contribute to the independence, quality of life and standard of living of Canada's war Veterans, eligible Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members, RCMP clients, qualified civilians and their families in recognition of their sacrifice to the nation.
② Pensions Advocacy Program	The rights of Veterans Affairs Canada clients protected through professional, legal representation in appealing decisions related to disability pensions and allowances.
③ Canada Remembers Program	A knowledgeable Canadian public that recognizes the achievements and sacrifices of Canada's citizens in the defence of freedom and appreciates the historical significance of these accomplishments in the development of Canada as a nation.
④ Corporate Administration	Activities focus on service improvement and organizational effectiveness through the strategic management of our staff, improved communications, expanded use of technologies and a greater contribution to national policy development in areas that are directly related to the well-being and recognition of our Veterans and other clients.
⑤ Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program	Fairness in the Disability Pension and War Veterans Allowance Program.

VAC's six priorities were last reviewed and amended in February 2004. Of these six priorities, up to three priorities are aligned with each of the first four strategic outcomes below, and some priorities apply to more than one strategic outcome. VRAB has four priorities which were recently introduced in their *Strategic Plan 2003-2006*. The following table illustrates how VAC's and VRAB's priorities are aligned within our strategic outcomes, as well as the associated resources over the next three years.

Strategic Outcome	Associated Resources (\$ millions)	Priorities	Type of Priority
Benefits and Services Programs	8,264.0	Improving and expanding services for Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members	Ongoing
		Partnering to serve the RCMP and eligible civilians	Ongoing
		Transforming service delivery and promoting innovation in policies and practices	Ongoing
Pensions Advocacy Program	25.2	Improving and expanding services for Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members	Ongoing
		Partnering to serve the RCMP and eligible civilians	Ongoing
Canada Remembers Program	144.3	Providing strong leadership in Remembrance programming through effective partnerships	Ongoing
Corporate Administration	172.4	Aligning our strategic human resources plan to support the goals of the organization and aspirations of our people	Ongoing
		Advancing the development of our information management and information technology capacity in support of service improvement, organizational effectiveness and Government On-Line	Ongoing
Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program	31.4	Improved communication with appellants, staff and stakeholders	New
		Improved service delivery	New
		Improved management structure and capacity	New
		Smooth transition	New

The information provided in the rest of this section is structured in such a way to profile Veterans Affairs' long-term strategic outcomes and priorities over the next three years. The main content under each strategic outcome shows what we're going to do to better serve Canadians (in particular our Veterans and other clients), how much we plan to spend, how we'll monitor our progress, any challenges and risks we may face, and how our plans and priorities will be of benefit.

Benefits and Services Programs

Strategic Outcome

The delivery of benefits and services that contribute to the independence, quality of life and standard of living of Canada's war Veterans, eligible Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members, RCMP clients, qualified civilians and their families in recognition of their sacrifice to the nation.

Planned Spending (April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2007): \$8,264.0 million

Priorities

- ✓ Improving and expanding services for Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members
- ✓ Partnering to serve the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and eligible civilians
- ✓ Transforming service delivery and promoting innovation in policies and practices

Introduction:

Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) is responsible for delivering pensions and health care, and for providing social and economic support to Veterans and other eligible clients across Canada. This is challenging for the Department for two reasons: the diversity of our client groups whose demographics are shifting, and the increasingly complex needs of each of these client groups. As a result, VAC continues to be innovative in adapting our programs and services to meet all of our clients' needs.

What we're going to do to serve our Veterans and other clients better:

Our priorities over the next three years will focus on how we can improve our service delivery, build on our partnerships, and interact with our Veterans and other clients to better understand and address their diverse and evolving needs. Our Canadian Forces (CF) clients are younger and their needs are markedly different from our older traditional war service Veterans. Our Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) clients are also typically younger and have unique needs in comparison to both our CF clients and older traditional war service Veterans. As the number of our CF and RCMP clients increases, we must adjust our established programs and services to address their respective needs. The modernization of our programs and services is essential to VAC in meeting the needs of a diverse family of clients.

Ste. Anne's Hospital, located in the West Island of Montréal, Quebec, offers high quality long-term and respite care to more than 500 Veterans and eligible civilians. Its responsibility is to take care of the physical, psychological and social needs of its patients. In order to maintain this high standard of service, the staff at Ste. Anne's Hospital constantly seek ways to improve the manner in which they provide their



services. This includes upgrading the facilities; improving the specialized services offered to Canadian Forces members and Veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress syndrome or other psychological problems linked to operational stress; and continuing its work in the fields of dementia, dysphagia, pain, as well as clinical research.

The hospital, originally constructed in 1917, is presently undergoing major renovations which involves construction of a power plant and electrical sub-station by the Fall of 2004, construction of a new pavilion by the Winter of 2005, and renovation of a main tower by the Spring of 2007. As a result of this work, Veterans will benefit from an updated, safer environment with each Veteran having a private room. Progress on this major project is monitored by a project modernization team.

Mental health services have been provided to still-serving members and released Veterans by Ste. Anne's Centre since its doors opened in 2001. Future plans involve consolidation of clinical programs, providing leadership in the national clinics network, and sharing clinical expertise with health professionals and Department employees. Partners in providing these mental health services include the Department of National Defence, the Government of Québec, and community mental health organizations.

Ste. Anne's Hospital has long held a reputation as a Centre of Excellence. It maintains this reputation by constantly evaluating its programs and adjusting them accordingly to meet the needs of its patients. Its future plans include finetuning of its dementia care program by the Winter of 2005 (in preparation for the transfer of this program to the new pavilion); evaluation of its dysphagia program with respect to quality of life in the institution by March 2005; evaluation of its pain management program by 2007; and continued clinical research on pain management, Alzheimer's disease, and post-traumatic stress syndrome. Some of this research will be conducted with the financial support of community partners, for example, post-secondary educational institutions and long-term care institutions. Each of these projects have predefined performance indicators which are monitored on an ongoing basis.

Canada's involvement in international operations and conflicts has resulted in an increased number of CF clients for Veterans Affairs as these men and women re-integrate into civilian life. Canada is recognized for its comprehensive system of benefits for the traditional war service Veterans. However, the face of Canada's Veterans is changing and so must the programs and services designed to support them.

It must be acknowledged that the Department of National Defence (DND) has made significant strides in recent years to improve the quality of life of its CF personnel.

Furthermore, the two departments, DND and VAC, continue to work cooperatively on initiatives to serve modern-day Veterans. Nevertheless, serious gaps in transition services will escalate for the modern-day Veterans without the full reform of VAC's authority for transition programs and services.

VAC established a Service and Program Modernization Task Force in September 2003 to research, develop and implement amendments to the current structure and content of its programs and services to better satisfy the emerging needs of CF Veterans and their families. Research, as well as the experience of other nations, has shown success in certain program areas. As a result, VAC is proposing to examine and consult with key stakeholders on the following five key program components: disability awards and wellness programs to replace today's pension system for new applicants; physical and psychological rehabilitation services, including vocational training and education; earnings loss support for Veterans undergoing rehabilitation, as well as longer-term support for Veterans who can no longer work because of a service-related illness or injury; job placement assistance; and extended health benefits for Veterans and their families. VAC is also consulting with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) on the transition needs of RCMP Veterans.

In 2004-2005, Veterans Affairs Canada will complete its integration of service delivery throughout the Department. This will ensure that clients and their families will receive the programs and services needed using a consistent service delivery framework. This integration of service delivery involves the establishment of client service teams, centres of expertise, and management centres. It will support decision-making principles; provide consistency in service delivery across the country; establish clear organizational/reporting relationships to ensure clarity of role and performance expectations; establish work processes to ensure effectiveness; establish resource allocation formulas to ensure equitable distribution of human and financial resources; and provide a working environment where balancing priorities from staff groups and stakeholders can be managed.



Interdisciplinary Client Service Teams, the Centres of Expertise (National Contact Centre Network, Treatment Authorization Centres, Pro-active Screening Centre, Adjudication Centre, and Foreign Countries Operations Centre) and Management Centres will be fully operational by March 2005. In addition to the above, enhancement of VAC's partnerships with the public, private, and voluntary sectors continues. These partnerships enable VAC to improve its capacity to meet client needs. Progress for these various initiatives is measured using success criteria and pre-determined performance indicators.

Solid research provides the necessary foundation for sound decision-making when formulating new or revising present programs and policies. Over the next three years, Veterans Affairs Canada will further build its research capacity and projects will be developed and implemented with special attention to plans which will modernize services for releasing Canadian Forces members, while addressing research needs related to the traditional wartime populations. Examples include mental health among

released Canadian Forces members, understanding service-related health problems such as noise-induced hearing loss, addressing challenges to the provision of support and service delivery to older Veterans including those living in rural areas. As well, a new model of knowledge transfer will be implemented. This model will effectively disseminate our work outputs and improve the utilization of our research information.

Veterans Affairs Canada, in partnership with the RCMP, assumed responsibility in December 2002 for the delivery of benefits and services to still-serving and retired members of the RCMP. As we began to serve these clients, we noted that the needs and expectations of the RCMP differ from our other two major client groups. The culture under which they live and work also differs greatly. These differences result in the need for our staff to relate better to members of the RCMP in order to identify and understand their respective needs. Therefore, both departments are working together on a needs analysis to determine other areas where there may be opportunities to partner. Results of this analysis should be available by the summer of 2004.

VAC could not provide the quality of benefits and services it does without the collaboration of our partners. Partnerships enable us to work with others to provide services more efficiently and effectively. Our partnerships also allow us to gain important knowledge from others' best practices. An excellent example of a truly effective partnership is the Federal Healthcare Partnership, a partnership of ten departments and agencies which deliver health care to clients, led by Veterans Affairs Canada. This partnership has resulted in substantial cost savings in the delivery and purchasing of health care services and products for the clients of our respective departments. More information is available under the Horizontal Initiatives section of this report.

How our plans and priorities benefit our Veterans and other clients:

Improving the services and programs we deliver benefits all of our clients. For our Veterans at Ste. Anne's Hospital, constantly improving our programs and renovating our facilities result in a higher quality of care. For our CF and RCMP clients, the efforts we make to better understand their respective needs means that we can do more for them when they seek support and assistance from VAC. For all of our clients across Canada, the integration of our services will result in better coordination of services within VAC and with other services in the community, more focus on high risk clients, and annual pro-active calls to clients.



Web Site Access

DND-VAC Centre for the Support of Injured and Retired Members and Their Families:

- # About Us
- # Death and Disability
- # Functions
- # Post Deployment

http://www.dnd.ca/hr/thecentre/engraph/home_e.asp

Clients:

- # Bereavement
- # Canadian Forces Activities
- # Entitlement Guidelines
- # Foreign Countries Operations
- # Guide to Access VAC Health Benefits and the Veterans Independence Program
- # Health Promotion
- # Medals and Decorations
- # Veterans Services

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/clients/>

Providers and Professionals:

- # Care for the Caregiver
- # Client-Centered Service Approach
- # Health Care Provider Information
- # Ste. Anne's Hospital

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/providers/>

Pensions Advocacy Program

Strategic Outcome

The rights of Veterans Affairs Canada clients protected through professional, legal representation in appealing decisions related to disability pensions and allowances.

Planned Spending (April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2007): \$25.2 million

Priorities

- ✓ Improving and expanding services for Canadian Forces Veterans and still-serving members
- ✓ Partnering to serve the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and eligible civilians

Introduction:

Staff in our Bureau of Pensions Advocates' fourteen district offices across Canada are fully responsible for providing advice and counselling to clients who are uncertain about any aspect of the decision they receive from Veterans Affairs Canada regarding their application for pension. The Bureau's lawyers and their legal assistants work together to help applicants determine the best way to proceed in their particular situations. This assistance is provided free of charge. The options include the Bureau requesting a review of the case by a Pension Adjudicator, representing a client before the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB), or counselling a client not to proceed. Of the applicants that proceed to VRAB, approximately 95% are represented by the Bureau. The remaining 5% are represented by a Service Officer of a Royal Canadian Legion or Veterans' organization, a private solicitor, or they may choose to represent themselves.

What we're going to do to serve our Veterans and other clients better:

A number of initiatives will be undertaken over the next three years to improve service to our Veterans and other clients. Within the Bureau, a client feedback mechanism will be implemented by October 2004 to monitor client satisfaction with the services delivered by the Bureau. The Bureau will also be working with VRAB to develop VRAB's new case management system by July 2005. This will allow for improved case preparation and resolution of issues before the hearing takes place. It could also result in a decision being rendered quickly with no need for a hearing. In consultation with the Department of National Defence (DND), the Bureau's staff will continue to increase VAC's presence on Canadian Forces bases in Ottawa, Gagetown, Valcartier and Edmonton. Lastly, the Bureau will build on its relationship with the RCMP to increase the Bureau's contact with RCMP members, civilian members, and retired members and their families, through increased presentations and distribution of printed information on VAC's benefits and services.

To monitor its progress, twice a year the Bureau will evaluate the feedback received from clients and adjust its communications and services to accommodate the needs identified by its clients. Feedback from members of the Canadian Forces and the RCMP will also be assessed and measures taken to improve and increase our interaction with these two groups of clients.

How our plans and priorities benefit our Veterans and other clients:

Streamlining and improving the review and appeal process with VRAB will result in a faster turnaround, thus giving the applicant their decision in a timely manner. Implementing a client feedback mechanism will provide the Bureau with valuable information on clients' satisfaction and will identify service gaps where the Bureau needs to focus in meeting the needs of its clients. Increasing awareness among the Canadian Forces and RCMP members of the services that VAC provides is crucial. These clients may not be aware of all of their options if they are dissatisfied with the decision they have received. The Bureau's goal is to ensure that these clients have a better understanding of the pension/redress process, thus lessening the frustration of clients.



Web Site Access

Bureau of Pensions Advocates

- # The Role of Bureau of Pensions Advocates
- # The Review and Appeal Process
- # How to Contact the Bureau

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/organization/bpa1>

Canada Remembers Program

Strategic Outcome

A knowledgeable Canadian public that recognizes the achievements and sacrifices of Canada's citizens in the defence of freedom and appreciates the historical significance of these accomplishments in the development of Canada as a nation.

Planned Spending (April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2007): \$144.3 million

Priority

- ✓ Providing strong leadership in Remembrance programming through effective partnerships

Introduction:

Remembering and honouring Veterans who have proudly served our country in war, armed conflict, and in peace, is crucial for all Canadians in preserving the legacy of our Veterans. The objective of our Remembrance programming is to create and support opportunities for Canadians, especially youth, to learn about, develop an understanding of, and take pride in Canada's contribution to world peace and freedom.

What we're going to do to serve Canadians better:

Over the planning period, Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) will continue to provide a leadership role in conducting ceremonies and events nationally and internationally, that remember and honour Canada's war dead and Veterans. The year 2004 is the "Year of Remembrance" for the 60th Anniversary of D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, and the 60th Anniversary of the Italian Campaign. The year 2005 is the "Year of Remembrance" for the 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II. These commemorations include a VAC-led overseas delegation with an emphasis on passing the "Torch of Remembrance" to Canada's youth.

We will continue to provide for the development and distribution of innovative learning products, primarily for our youth. As well, we will continue to provide Canada's youth with learning opportunities through their participation in ceremonies and events, after which they can be encouraged to become "Ambassadors of Remembrance" to share their experiences and the importance of Remembrance with other youth. We will improve access to our historical information on the VAC Web Site. This will include providing digitized oral histories from Veterans.

By early 2005, the Seventh Book of Remembrance entitled "In the Service of Peace" will be installed in the Memorial Chamber of the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, and made available for viewing on VAC's Web Site. This book is being created by VAC, in

partnership with the Department of National Defence, and with the support of many Veterans' organizations. It will recognize those who died as a result of their military service, and whom are not already recognized in the previous Books of Remembrance.

Work will continue on the restoration of Canada's thirteen First World War memorials located in France and Belgium. This restoration, a \$30 million five-year project, involves the repair, restoration, and rehabilitation of memorials (whose average age is 75 years) – the most notable being the Vimy Monument; the conservation of battlefield terrain and forest management at Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel; and a subterranean features investigation at these two sites. The Vimy Monument rehabilitation work will



commence in 2004-2005 with a completion date of July 2006. The rehabilitation and restoration of the other smaller memorials are at different stages of completion. The conservation of battlefield terrain is progressing with completion expected in 2005-2006. The subterranean features investigation has been completed. In 2004-2005, the results of this investigation will be analyzed and recommendations will

be presented to VAC senior management. The scale of this project requires the cooperation and participation of a globally diverse group of partners, including Public Works and Government Services Canada, Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Canadian Forest Services, United States Parks Services, Office National des Forêts de France, and the Canadian Embassies in France, Belgium, and Croatia. VAC's role, in this partnership, is to monitor and manage the entire project to ensure it is completed on budget and on time by July 2006.

How our plans and priorities benefit Canadians:

Our Remembrance programming endeavours to engage Canadians, especially our youth, in Remembrance activities so that they may keep alive the memory of our Veterans' sacrifices and achievements, and understand the significance of Canada's military heritage to their lives today. This benefits all Canadians as they take pride in Canada's contribution to world peace and freedom. Our Seventh Book of Remembrance will ensure that those who lost their lives as a result of military service will be remembered. The restoration and rehabilitation of our war memorials ensures that the dignity and integrity of these memorials will be preserved, and that the health and safety of the public and employees at these sites will be maintained.



Web Site Access

Canada Remembers:

- # Books of Remembrance
- # Canadian Virtual War Memorial
- # History
- # Memorials
- # Records and Collections

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/remembers/>

Canadian Battlefield Memorials Restoration Project:

- # Battlefield Terrain Conservation at Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel
- # First World War Memorials in Europe
- # Interactive Vimy
- # Rehabilitation of Canada's Memorial Sites
- # Restoration and Rehabilitation of Vimy
- # Subterranean Features Investigation at Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=Memorials/cbmr>

Youth and Educators:

- # Activities
- # Multimedia
- # Research
- # Resources for Teachers
- # Stuff for Students

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/youth/>

Corporate Administration

Activities focus on service improvement and organizational effectiveness through the strategic management of our staff, improved communications, expanded use of technologies and a greater contribution to national policy development in areas that are directly related to the well-being and recognition of our Veterans and other clients.

Planned Spending (April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2007): \$172.4 million

Priorities

- ✓ Aligning our strategic human resources plan to support the goals of the organization and the aspirations of our people
- ✓ Advancing the development of our information management and information technology capacity in support of service improvement, organizational effectiveness, and Government On-Line

Introduction:

It's important that Veterans Affairs manages its limited resources wisely in order to advance the Portfolio's initiatives. How we manage our internal operations contributes to the success of the service we provide to our Veterans and other clients. Our dedicated staff are pivotal in the progress we make on this front; therefore, we need to ensure that we support our staff as they conduct their day-to-day operations. To do this, we provide them with the necessary training and equipment required to do their job, and the information they need for work-life balance, career enhancement, and conflict resolution. For the Portfolio to function effectively, we also need to manage and monitor our future direction. Our various strategic plans assist staff in this respect. The Government of Canada's government-wide initiatives also provide us with guidance.

What we're going to do internally to serve our Veterans and other clients better:

The Portfolio has a number of strategic plans in place which can be found on both of our web sites. We are also active participants of various government-wide initiatives. These initiatives and strategic plans provide direction for staff as we improve our service to our clients, as well as provide the general public with information on what we're doing to serve them better.

Our *Human Resources Strategic Plan 2002-2007* serves as a guide to our organization as we move forward with our plans and priorities. This strategic plan addresses staff retention and recruitment, learning and development opportunities, the need for greater diversity in the workplace, employee counselling, and effective ways of managing stress and balancing workloads.

Continuous enhancement of our information technology capacity is necessary to accommodate service improvement. For our Veterans and other clients, the on-line services that we currently offer and plan to offer in the future must be supported by secure and competent information technology. Effective information technology also enables our staff to be fully productive in serving clients.

Communications plays a prominent role in how we interact with our staff, clients, stakeholders, and the general public. Our Communications Division ensures that communications across the Department are well coordinated, effectively managed and disseminated, as well as responsive to the diverse needs of our staff, clients, stakeholder groups, and the general public. It is their responsibility to show Canadians how strongly Veterans Affairs Canada contributes to the federal government's priority of strengthening our social foundations. Lastly, through communication of our Remembrance activities and events, Canadians realize the important part Veterans Affairs Canada plays in the Government of Canada's priority of ensuring that Canada's place in the world is one of relevance, influence, dignity and pride.

The Government of Canada has a number of key government themes and management initiatives that government departments are expected to integrate into their day-to-day operations. For Veterans Affairs, the following initiatives are essential to improving the programs and services we deliver to Canadians.

Government On-Line

In the *1999 Speech from the Throne*, the Government of Canada made a commitment to become "known around the world as the government most connected to its citizens, with Canadians able to access all government information and services on-line at the time and place of their choosing." The intent of the Government On-Line Initiative is two-fold: that the federal government's commonly used programs and services be on-line by the end of 2005, and that organizations will collaborate to bring about more integration of their programs and services as a means of simplifying access by citizens. At Veterans Affairs, we strongly support this commitment. We have made progress in three specific areas of interest to Canadians. The first area is the availability of Veterans Affairs Canada's electronic services and information with respect to its pensions and allowances, and health care programs through implementation of the Benefits and Health Services On-line e-health assessment. The second area relates to on-line Remembrance of those who honourably served Canada. The third area involves availability of electronic services and information relevant to seniors, their families and caregivers through the creation of the Seniors Canada On-line Web Site and its connection to the Seniors' Info Provincial/Municipal Web Site created for seniors and their families living in and around the City of Brockville, Ontario.

By 2006, via the Internet, Veterans and other clients will be able to submit an application for a VAC disability pension or request a reassessment of a disability pension currently in place with VAC. Other key initiatives include a disability pension client status inquiry and an interactive interview process. Expansion of the Veteran burial information on the Canadian Virtual War Memorial Web Site will be completed in 2005. Building on the success of the Brockville Web Site, VAC will continue to work

with its partners in the Canadian Seniors Partnership to connect seniors' web sites (also known as portals) right across the country, and improve service delivery through multi-jurisdictional collaboration. Lastly, preliminary research will be completed by March 2005 regarding the feasibility of conducting on-line transactions via this network of seniors' portals.

The success of our Government On-Line initiatives could not be achieved without the collaborative efforts of the many partners who share the vision. This includes other federal government departments and agencies, provincial governments, municipalities, voluntary organizations, as well as the private sector.

Modern Comptrollership

Focussing on sound management of resources and effective decision-making, modern comptrollership is another Government of Canada commitment to excellence in serving all Canadians. Veterans Affairs continues to do its part by concentrating on the following seven key elements: strategic leadership, clear accountability, motivated people, values and ethics, mature risk management, integrated performance, and rigorous stewardship. Because modern comptrollership is such a large-scale initiative with numerous projects at various degrees of completion, all projects (once assigned), will be monitored under a framework of individual action plans. Each project's action plan will include responsibility for identified outcomes as well as major milestones, time frames, human resources required, and dollar costs. These milestones are reviewed through a periodic reporting process to senior management. As the Modern Comptrollership Initiative evolves into the Management Accountability Framework, it is anticipated that the majority of VAC's projects will be completed by the end of 2005 with the remaining projects targeted for completion by 2010.

The Veterans Review and Appeal Board is also making considerable progress in the area of modern comptrollership. Since its initial risk awareness and assessment session held in 2002, an annual assessment of risk is conducted by the Board. Following the 2003 assessment, the Board has begun to develop a risk profile and action plan to define mitigating controls, responsibilities and accountabilities. The Board will also continue to implement improved management practices, provide extensive training, and promote dialogues on values and ethics.

Service Improvement Initiative

The government-wide Service Improvement Initiative requires that all federal departments and agencies, providing key services to the public, contribute to achieving a minimum of 10% improvement in client satisfaction by 2005. In order to establish reliable baseline data on the level of clients' satisfaction with our programs and services, VAC conducted a National Client Satisfaction Survey in June 2001. VAC's overall rating of client satisfaction was 85%. During the April-May 2003 period, VAC administered a follow-up survey to measure progress made and identify future priorities for service improvement. The overall rating of client satisfaction increased to 87%, with all major client groups reporting higher satisfaction ratings. The most

significant improvement occurred among Canadian Forces Veterans and clients, who advanced from a 72% satisfaction rating in 2001, to 80% in 2003.

VAC's plans over the next three years are to maintain the level of client satisfaction on the service elements that have received ratings of 90% or higher, and continue to improve upon the service elements where the ratings were less than the current overall average of 87%. Also, based on the results of the surveys mentioned above and a telephone opinion poll conducted in June 2002, new Service Standards will take effect in late 2004. This will include standards for all channels of service such as telephone, in-person, mail, and electronic service delivery. Lastly, a third National Client Satisfaction Survey is tentatively scheduled for April 2005 to benchmark against previous survey results.

VAC's overall rating of client satisfaction . . . 85% in 2001 and 87% in 2003.

The challenges faced with this particular initiative include maintaining client satisfaction levels on service elements that received ratings in excess of 90%, and ensuring service improvement is an integral component of all strategic priorities within the Department. VAC's 2002-2005 Service Improvement Plan, comprising in excess of 200 initiatives, focusses on service gaps identified by VAC's clients. This will guide the Department in its implementation of continuous service improvement.

Sustainable Development Strategy

Veterans Affairs produced its first two Sustainable Development Strategies in 1997 and 2001. In our third strategy, 2004-2006, challenges and comprehensive action plans are laid out along the following four sustainable development themes: sustaining the health and well-being of our clients; sustaining the health and well-being of our staff; sustaining knowledge and information; and sustaining government operations. Some targets include taking steps to realize reduced utilization of health care services, more successful vocational placements and overall increased client satisfaction, as well as addressing environmental and SDS issues that might affect the health and well-being of our family of clients or staff. We report to our stakeholders by means of a report card, *Our Sustainable Development Journey*, which is posted on Veterans Affairs Canada's Web Site, and describes progress made on pre-determined milestones. Periodically, audits and reviews are conducted to ensure compliance with stated targets and objectives in our strategies.

Our biggest and ongoing challenge is educating internal and external stakeholders about sustainable development and why is important for the present and for the future. In concert with our federal counterparts we develop messaging and communication tools that help others to understand that sustainable development means implementing a process that integrates environmental, economic and social considerations into our day-to-day business.

How our plans and priorities benefit our Veterans and other clients:

By maintaining our strong commitment to the Government of Canada's government-wide initiatives, Veterans Affairs improves the service that we deliver to Canadians. Efficient and effective internal operations also results in efficient and effective service for our Veterans and other clients.



Web Site Access

Departmental Reports:

- # Departmental Audit and Evaluation Reports
- # Five-Year Strategic Plan
- # Human Resources Five-Year Strategic Plan
- # Performance Report
- # Report on Plans and Priorities
- # Service Improvement Initiative
- # Sustainable Development Strategy

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/reports>

Government On-Line:

- # Government On-Line 2002
- # Government On-Line 2003
- # Government On-Line 2004

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/golrep>

Seniors Canada On-line:

- # A-Z Index
- # Canadian Seniors Partnership and Networking Registry
- # E-Forms and Services
- # Government Contacts
- # Life Events
- # My Province or Territory
- # Search by Subject (Care for Seniors, Health, Housing, Veterans, etc.)

<http://www.seniors.gc.ca/scolPortSearchScreen.jsp?userLanguage=en>

Seniors' Info - Brockville:

- # A-Z Index
- # Active Living and Leisure
- # Community Resources
- # Forms and Applications
- # Frequently Asked Questions
- # Health and Well-Being
- # Opportunities for Learning
- # Publications

<http://www.seniorsinfo.ca/scripts/english/ON/brockville/index.asp>

Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program

Strategic Outcome

Fairness in the Disability Pension and War Veterans Allowance Program.

Planned Spending (April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2007): \$31.4 million

Priorities

- ✓ Improved communication with appellants, staff and stakeholders
- ✓ Improved service delivery
- ✓ Improved management structure and capacity
- ✓ Smooth transition

Introduction:

Every year, thousands of Canadians submit an application to Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) for a disability pension or War Veterans Allowance. Once the application is processed, the applicant receives a favourable, partially favourable, or unfavourable decision. Applicants who are dissatisfied with a decision made by VAC may request a review by the Veterans Review and Appeal Board (VRAB) – a quasi-judicial tribunal which operates independently of VAC. Should the results of this review not prove satisfactory, they may then file an appeal to VRAB. Applicants who are still not satisfied with the resulting decision at the appeal level can submit an application for reconsideration if there is an error in fact or law in the appeal decision or if they have new evidence to support the claim. Their final recourse is an appeal to the Federal Court of Canada. For the review and appeal process that takes place at VRAB, every effort is made to ensure applicants receive full and fair hearings that are conducted in a timely manner by a competent, specialized and independent body of adjudicators.

What we're going to do to serve our Veterans and other clients better:

Over the next three years, steps will be taken to streamline and improve VRAB's review and appeal process. This includes implementation of the above-mentioned priorities which originated in VRAB's *Strategic Plan 2003-2006* (developed in the Spring of 2003).

More frequent communication with appellants and stakeholders is necessary to increase awareness of the Board's role, responsibilities and practices in the pensions and allowances appeal process. During this planning period, VRAB will develop a Communication Strategy by the Spring of 2005 to improve communication with appellants, staff and stakeholders; increase its communication with the client by making contact earlier and more frequently throughout the review and appeal process; and make more information available to Veterans and other clients through written

publications and its Web Site.

By July 2005, VRAB will complete implementation of four strategies for improved service delivery: a new case management system, improved member training, improved research capability, and a legislative and policy framework. The new case management system will involve improved case preparation earlier in the appeal process. The improved member training will strengthen the current members' training program including incorporation of a feedback/communication mechanism. The improved research capability will involve enhancement of VRAB's research capacity to provide members with the most up-to-date and comprehensive medical and legal information available. The legislative and policy framework will authorize and support the other three service delivery strategies.

In order to improve service delivery, VRAB will also improve its management structure and capacity to accommodate the upcoming changes in the provision of services. To do so, VRAB will review its financial and human resources, as well as its planning and information technology management capabilities. A plan will be created by the Fall of 2004 specifying the necessary modifications to better allocate resources.

Implementing the above-stated priorities will require an overall change management strategy and action plan detailing how VRAB intends to fully implement its strategic plan.

This action plan will be completed by the Fall of 2004 and will address such items as improvements to VRAB's internal processes, potential challenges and risks, as well as training required for members and staff.

Monitoring of these priorities will take place through a number of avenues. The action plan previously mentioned will be used to measure progress and ensure that milestones are being reached as planned. Ongoing consultations with stakeholders will provide opportunities for input on how issues are being resolved during the implementation of VRAB's various initiatives. To give clients the opportunity to validate VRAB's initiatives, a client satisfaction survey will be conducted by 2006. As well, continual review of information pertaining to turnaround times and the quality of decisions will confirm whether positive change has taken place as a result of VRAB's efforts.

How our plans and priorities will benefit our Veterans and other clients:

Improving the way VRAB conducts its reviews and appeals will result in a more coordinated, standardized, efficient service to our Veterans and other clients. For clients, this means faster turnaround times for decisions if issues can be resolved before the hearing process, thus improving client services. Clients will also have more information available to them through VRAB's staff, publications or Web Site, thus increasing the clients' awareness of their rights and the Board's processes. For Veterans

VRAB's Vision . . . "To be an exemplary leader in administrative tribunals that demonstrates fairness, competence and excellence in service to Canadians by providing independent, consistent and reasonable decisions that are grounded in law."

Affairs, these changes will result in improved consistency in decision-making and a stronger, more collaborative working relationship amongst VRAB, the Bureau of Pensions Advocates, and the Veterans' organizations.



Web Site Access

Veterans Review and Appeal Board

About VRAB

Frequently Asked Questions

Strategic Plan 2003-2006

<http://www.vrab-tacra.gc.ca>

Organization

Strategic Outcomes and Business Lines

The following table identifies our business line resources by strategic outcome for the 2004-2005 fiscal year.

Business Line (\$ millions)	Strategic Outcome					Total
	①	②	③	④	⑤	
Benefits and Services	2,660.7	8.4	51.4	--	--	2,720.5
Corporate Administration	--	--	--	59.5	--	59.5
Total for Veterans Affairs Canada						2,780.0
Veterans Review and Appeal Board	--	--	--	--	10.7	10.7
Total for the Veterans Affairs Portfolio						2,790.7

Strategic Outcomes:

- ① Benefits and Services Programs
- ② Pensions Advocacy Program
- ③ Canada Remembers Program
- ④ Corporate Administration
- ⑤ Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program

Accountability

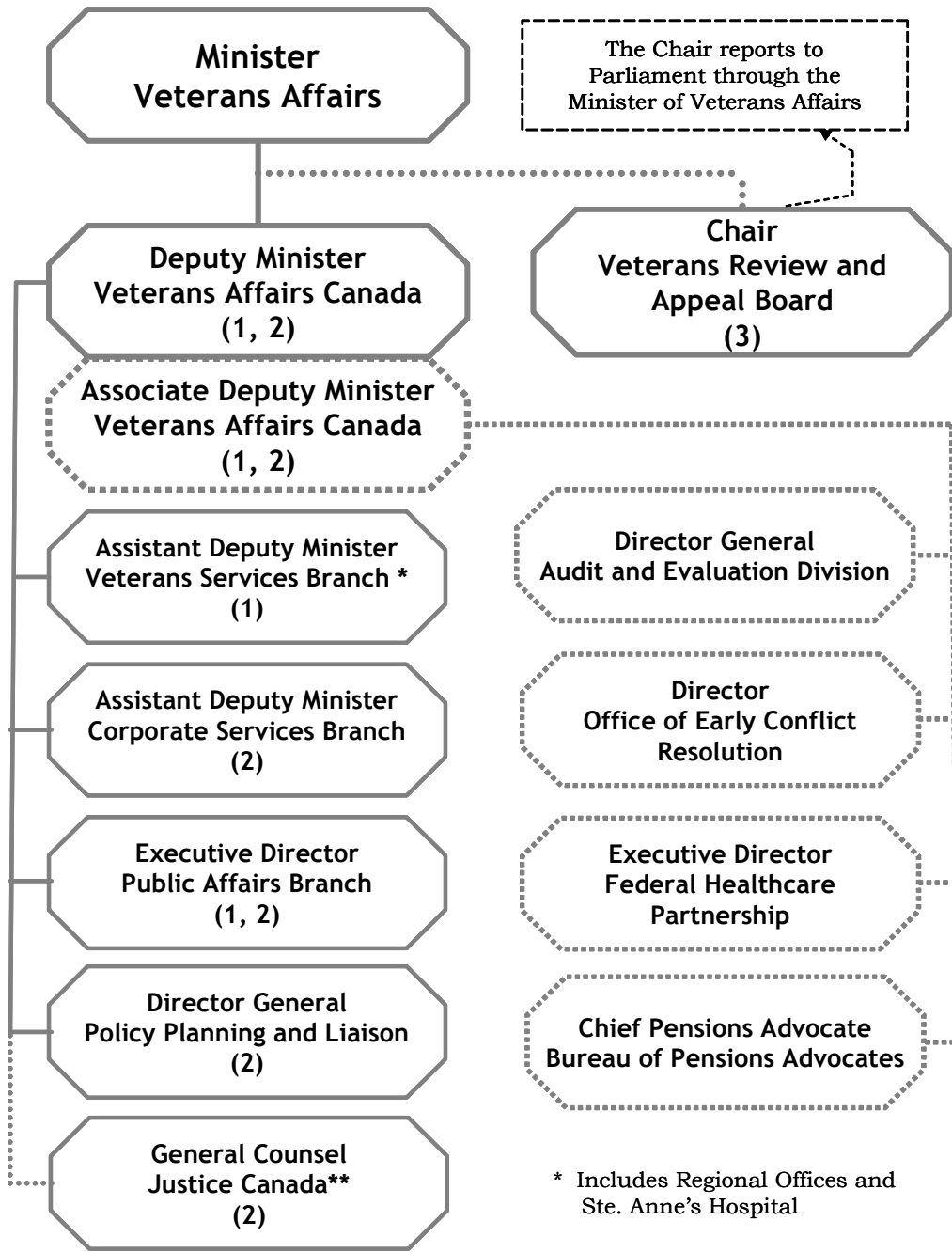
Veterans Affairs is a Portfolio comprised of one Department (Veterans Affairs Canada) and one Board (Veterans Review and Appeal Board). This Board operates at arm's length to the Department and reports to Parliament through the Minister of Veterans Affairs.

The Department functions with three branches – Veterans Services, Corporate Services, and Public Affairs, all of which are accountable to the Deputy Minister. Also accountable to the Deputy Minister are an Associate Deputy Minister and two entities (Policy Planning and Liaison, and the Bureau of Pensions Advocates). As well, General Counsel (Department of Justice) is functionally responsible to the Deputy Minister for legal services. The Associate Deputy Minister has overall responsibility for Audit and Evaluation, Early Conflict Resolution, and the Federal Healthcare Partnership.

The Board functions with one layer of accountability where the Deputy Chair; 29 Governor-in-Council appointed members; Executive Director; Director, Legal Services; and Director, Professional Development and Advisory Services are accountable to the Chair.

The table below provides the expenditures and number of full-time equivalent employees for each business line of Veterans Affairs. The organization chart on the following page illustrates how Veterans Affairs is structured and the business line(s) associated with each senior official, for example, **(1)** Benefits and Services Business Line; **(2)** Corporate Administration Business Line; and **(3)** Veterans Review and Appeal Board Business Line.

Business Line	2004-2005	
	Associated Expenditures (\$ millions)	Associated Full-Time Equivalents
Veterans Affairs Program		
(1) Benefits and Services	2,720.5	2,791
(2) Corporate Administration	59.5	462
Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program		
(3) Veterans Review and Appeal Board	10.7	123



* Includes Regional Offices and Ste. Anne's Hospital

** General Counsel is functionally responsible to the Deputy Minister for legal services

Portfolio Planned Spending

The table below summarizes the Portfolio's Main Estimates plus Supplementary Estimates, the Minister of Finance's Budget and other associated adjustments to arrive at the total planned spending requirement for Veterans Affairs. It also identifies our planned Full-Time Equivalents levels over the planning period.

	Forecast Spending	Planned Spending	Planned Spending	Planned Spending
(\$ millions)	2003-2004*	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Budgetary Main Estimates (gross)				
Total Main Estimates	2,498.1	2,787.7	2,878.8	2,967.8
Adjustments (Planned Spending not in Main Estimates):				
Capital Projects:				
Ste. Anne's Hospital Renovations	5.2	1.0	--	--
Canadian Battlefield Memorials Restoration	3.2	0.5	--	--
Funding to Juno Beach Centre	1.8	1.5	--	--
Additional funding for health care including drug benefits and long-term care	66.1	--	--	--
Extension of housekeeping and grounds maintenance services under the Veterans Independence Program to qualified survivors or primary caregivers	14.0	--	--	--
Increased funding for disability pensions	1.6	--	--	--
Miscellaneous funding authorities offset by projected funding lapses	(10.9)	--	--	--
Total Adjustments	81.0	3.0	--	--
Net Planned Spending	2,579.1	2,790.7	2,878.8	2,967.8
Less: Non-Respendable Revenue	30.9	29.7	28.6	27.5
Plus: Cost of Services Received Without Charge	26.3	26.3	26.3	26.3
Net Cost of Programs	2,574.5	2,787.3	2,876.5	2,966.6
Full-Time Equivalents	3,459	3,376	3,418	3,448

* Reflects best forecast of total planned spending to the end of the fiscal year.

The above spending trend reflects higher costs for benefits that are increased in line with changes to the consumer price index, and increased costs related to higher access to health care benefits by an aging clientele. The spending trend also reflects the costs of providing benefits to greater numbers of Canadian Forces clients whose needs differ from those of the traditional war service Veterans.

Annexes

Table 1: Summary of Capital Spending by Program and Business Line

Business Line (\$ millions)	Forecast Spending 2003-2004	Planned Spending 2004-2005	Planned Spending 2005-2006	Planned Spending 2006-2007
Veterans Affairs Program				
Benefits and Services*	7.6	34.8	26.1	17.4
Corporate Administration	--	--	--	--
Total	7.6	34.8	26.1	17.4

* Capital spending for the Benefits and Services business line includes Major Capital Spending identified below (excluding Salary and Operating and Management costs for the project team) for 2003-2004 to 2006-2007. Funding has been approved by Treasury Board through Effective Project Approval (EPA) to 2006-2007.

Table 2: Details on Project Spending

(\$ millions)	Current Estimated Total Cost*	Forecast Spending to March 31, 2004	Planned Spending 2004-2005	Planned Spending 2005-2006	Planned Spending 2006-2007	Future Year Spending Requirement
Veterans Affairs Program: Benefits and Services Business Line						
Quebec: Ste. Anne's Hospital Project (PPA)	67.7	8.6	26.1	17.9	15.1	--
Overseas: Canadian Battlefield Memorials Restoration Project (PPA)	30.0	8.0	9.7	9.3	3.0	--
Total	97.7	16.6	35.8	27.2	18.1	--

* The current estimated total cost for the above projects is based upon indicative estimates. Treasury Board has approved funding based on EPA to 2006-2007.

Table 3: Summary of Transfer Payments

Business Line (\$ millions)	Forecast Spending 2003-2004*	Planned Spending 2004-2005	Planned Spending 2005-2006	Planned Spending 2006-2007
Veterans Affairs Program: Grants				
Benefits and Services	1,579.7	1,683.0	1,750.3	1,808.6
Corporate Administration	--	--	--	--
Total Grants	1,579.7	1,683.0	1,750.3	1,808.6
Veterans Affairs Program: Contributions				
Benefits and Services	207.1	253.5	261.7	269.9
Total Contributions	207.1	253.5	261.7	269.9
Total Grants and Contributions	1,786.8	1,936.5	2,012.0	2,078.5

* Reflects the best forecast of total planned spending to the end of the fiscal year.

Table 4: Sources of Non-Respendable Revenue

	Forecast Revenue	Planned Revenue	Planned Revenue	Planned Revenue
(\$ millions)	2003-2004*	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Veterans Affairs Program				
Provincial hospital and medical insurance plans	16.8	15.7	14.6	13.5
Other in-patient hospital services	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.0
Recovery of pensions from foreign governments and services to foreign Veterans	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Refund of previous year's expenditures	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Other	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Sub-Total	30.9	29.7	28.6	27.5
Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program				
Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program	--	--	--	--
Total Non-Respendable Revenue	30.9	29.7	28.6	27.5

* Reflects the best forecast of total planned revenue to the end of the fiscal year.


Table 5: Net Cost of Programs for the Estimates Year

(\$ millions)	Veterans Affairs Program	Veterans Review and Appeal Board Program	Total
Net Planned Spending (Total Main Estimates plus Adjustments as per the Planned Spending Table)	2,780.0	10.7	2,790.7
Plus: Services received without charge			
Accommodations provided by Public Works and Government Services Canada	9.9	0.7	10.6
Contributions covering employers' share of employees' insurance premiums and expenditures paid by Treasury Board Secretariat (excluding revolving funds)	13.7	0.7	14.4
Workers' compensation coverage provided by Human Resources Development Canada	0.7	--	0.7
Salary and associated expenditures of legal services provided by Justice Canada	0.6	--	0.6
Sub-Total	24.9	1.4	26.3
Less: Non-respendable Revenue	29.7	--	29.7
2004-2005 Net Cost of Program	2,775.2	12.1	2,787.3

Table 6: Major Regulatory Initiatives

Regulatory initiatives result in the making of regulations by the Governor-in-Council, a Minister or an Administrative Agency. The following major regulatory initiatives are scheduled for implementation during the time period April 1, 2004 to March 31, 2007.

Regulations	Planned Results
<i>Children of Deceased Veterans Education Assistance Regulations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < Increase the maximum yearly grant in respect of the tuition expenses of eligible students, under the Children of Deceased Veterans Education Assistance Program. < Add provisions for yearly cost of living adjustments to the maximum grant.
<i>Veterans Burial Regulations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < Integrate and harmonize Veterans Affairs' burial programs by consolidating their existing governing legislation: the <i>Veterans Burial Regulations, 1995</i> and the <i>Last Post Fund Regulations, 1995</i>. < Provide for the implementation of a complete partnership with a veterans' organization (the Last Post Fund) for the delivery and administration of the program. < Contribute to service quality improvements. < Address technical observations made by the Standing Joint Committee for the Scrutiny of Regulations.
<i>Veterans Health Care Regulations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < Clarify health care program terms and conditions for survivors of eligible veterans, and make other technical changes.



Web Site Access

Legislation Administered by Veterans Affairs:

- Acts
- Regulations and Orders

<http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/Legislation>

Table 7: Horizontal Initiatives

Horizontal initiatives are defined as significant initiatives in which partners from two or more organizations have received program funding and have formally agreed to work together to achieve shared outcomes. Veterans Affairs Canada is the lead department for the Federal Healthcare Partnership (formerly the Health Care Coordination Initiative).

The Federal Healthcare Partnership (FHP) was established in 1994 to develop and implement a strategy to coordinate federal government purchasing of health care services and products for federal government clients at the lowest possible cost through coordination of efforts among departments and agencies. These clients (more than one million), include Veterans, Canadian Forces, RCMP, First Nations living on reserve, the Inuit, inmates of federal institutions, immigrants, and landed refugees. Ten departments and agencies with common interests formed this partnership to maximize efficiency and minimize duplication in their delivery of health care programs, while maintaining or improving the quality of the services they provide. The FHP's reporting requirements, resources, planned activities, and performance results are documented in their Business Plan, Accountability and Reporting Framework, and Annual Reports to the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada.

Over the next three years, Veterans Affairs Canada will continue in its lead role as host of the FHP Secretariat which supports the overall initiative by coordinating joint activities; providing analysis, planning and project management expertise; and representing the federal health delivery departments on a number of Federal/Provincial/Territorial committees. As well, VAC's Associate Deputy Minister will continue to serve as Chair of the FHP Secretariat. Lastly, the operational costs of the FHP Secretariat are funded by VAC.

Over the next three years, jointly negotiated fees, bulk purchases and collaborative policy development, collectively will result in improved quality of services to clients and approximately \$85 million in cost savings.

The challenges for a partnership this size are a multitude of differences among the participating departments and agencies including legal bases for programs, operational and policy requirements, technology, client demographics, and organizational structures. This is in addition to political pressures and scarce resources. With careful planning, collaboration and communication, positive results continue to emerge from the activities of this partnership. As a result, the outcomes of these activities are improved program management, monetary savings for all Canadians, and a better quality of life for federal clients, including our Veterans and other clients – a direct link to our Benefits and Services Programs Strategic Outcome.



Web Site Access

More information, including contact information, on this and other federal government departments' horizontal initiatives is available on Treasury Board Secretariat's Horizontal Results Database at http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hr-rh_e.asp.

Contact Us

General Enquiries

If you wish to make a general enquiry about Veterans Affairs Canada, its programs or services, please call 1-866-522-2122. If you wish to make a general enquiry about Veterans Review and Appeal Board, please call 1-800-450-8006.

Portfolio Publications

The Portfolio produces a variety of publications on its programs and services. Copies of these publications can be obtained from your nearest Veterans Affairs Canada district or regional office.

Our staff in Policy Planning and Liaison are responsible for coordinating the development of this report, the associated Performance Report, as well as a number of other departmental reports. These are available on-line at <http://www.vac-acc.gc.ca/general/sub.cfm?source=department/reports>. For more information or if you have any questions, please contact:

Ken Gairns
Manager, Strategic Priorities and Planning
Policy Planning and Liaison
Veterans Affairs Canada
P.O. Box 7700 (I.B. 030)
Charlottetown, PE
C1A 8M9
Telephone: (902) 626-2921
Facsimile: (902) 368-0437
Electronic Mail: plan@vac-acc.gc.ca